

DOLUS an VIRTUS?
OR,
An ANSWER
TO
A SEDITIOUS DISCOURSE
CONCERNING
The RELIGION of ENGLAND:
AND
The Settlement of *Reformed Christianity*
in its due Latitude.

Væ Vobis Hypocritæ!

To which are added,
The VOTES of PARLIAMENT.

L O N D O N,
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A SEDITIOUS DISCOURSE

C O N C E R N I N G

The RELIGION of ENGLAND.

MEETING with your *Discourse of the Religion of England, asserting, That Reformed Christianity settled in its due Latitude, is the Stability and Advancement of this Kingdom:* I was inclin'd to peruse it, because, casting my Eye upon your Preface, I found your first words acknowledge, *That Religion is deeply imprinted in humane Nature; and hath a great power over it;* therefore I could not but hope to meet with the great Effects of it, in your own; especially, since you seem'd so solicitous only for the *Peace of Religion, and the Nation;* and that you did so ingenuously profess, *That nothing was suggested in your Discourse for Politick ends: That Episcopacy was not undermin'd, nor*

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any other Form of Government insinuated: That all Pragmatical Arrogance, presuming to give Rules to Governors, or teach them what to do, was carefully avoided: That only the Possibility, Expediency, and Necessity of Moderation was represented: And that you humbly desired this honest intention of yours in pursuance of Peace, might find a favourable reception.

This is the pretended Incense you offer to the Publick good, hoping that the smoke of it will screen your Falshood from view; but being smoke, it vanisheth, and leaves your designs so perspicuous, that I esteemed my self obliged to detect you, and to shew the World how contrary your Discourse is to all these Pretensions in your Preface: A man may see an itching humor in you to be doing, but what, one can hardly conjecture, but by the shadows of your motions, which are subtle and violent, and therefore properly to be called *Presbyterian*.

Three differing wayes of Religion are mentioned in your Discourse to be in this Realm, viz. *Protestants of the Church of England*, *Protestants Non-conformists*, and *Papists*.

With the *Papists* you begin, and therein spend seven Sections, which are premised on purpose to make your Reader more attentive and kind to the Author, who would be accounted so fiery an enemy to them: But this part of your Discourse I am not concerned in, who neither am, nor ever was a *Papist*; nor do I pretend to understand their Religion, as you do; therefore I shall leave them to the consideration of the Parliament, who, you confess, hath appointed a Committee to receive Informations concerning them: only I shall offer somewhat out of your Discourse, whereby it may truly be discern'd how true an enemy you are in your heart to them.

I have heard very wise and great Politicians say, that *Jesuites* are but *Popish Presbyterians*, and *Presbyterians* but *Protestant Jesuites*: and it is no wonder, that Cocks of the Game, bred up in the same Principles, should sometimes fight with one another, not coldly, as with some others, but with most sharp and deadly strokes, provoked and enabled by the Spurs of Emulation and Pragmaticallness: Under this consideration I confesse you may be looked upon as an enemy, but wherein else, we will now consider.

In your Preface you acknowledge that in this your discourse, you only *submissively* offer to the consideration of your Superiours, a Relaxation only of the Prescribed Uniformity, and some Indulgence to Dissenters of sound Faith, and good life: amongst which number you account the *Papists*, because after the Character you have given of their Faith and Actions, you say in your Seventh Section, That Notwithstanding they have not changed their Principles, &c. but have taken methods of greater artifice and subtilty, yet you professe that your whole preceeding Discourse against them, is not directed against the security of their Persons and Fortunes, or any meet Indulgence or Clemencie towards them; but advise, That they may have their Faith to themselves, without being vexed with snares, or any wayes afflicted.

Here your Proposing a Tolleration for Popery, under the pretence of a meet Indulgence or Clemencie, must not by any means be thought a suggestion for Politique Ends, although 'tis one of the chiefest in your whole discourse, since it increases the number of the Dissenters from the Church of England, which presently makes the body of them (in your opinion) so momentous, &c. Next, The security (without any limitation) which you plead

for their *Persons* and *Fortunes* (which at once proposes the Repealing of all the *Pœnall Statutes* against them (which you account *snarcs*) is in your opinion, *only a Relaxation of the prescribed Uniformity, and no pragmatial arrogance, nor doth not* (in the least) *presume to teach your Governours what to doe*, contrary to the established *Sanctions* both of Church and State. But *Dat veniam Corvois*. You may write what you please, provided you pretend, *That you only propound these things in Case of insuperable necessity, and that for Truth's sake*: but should any thing of the like nature be in the least motioned by any else of whatsoever persuasion, we know the Tune, you would sing presently.

Now Sir, I will accompany you to your main design where you would be, though with much cunning & sline ss you creep to it by degrees, and with more Pollicy, even then, conceal it, when you speak it; so that none may see your skin, but only such as can see thorough the thin lawn of your Rhetorick.

- §. 10. First then in your Tenth Sect. you tell us, That you would have *Reformed Christianity* to be settled in the Kingdom in its *full extent*. In your Eleventh, *That Protestants Non-Conformists are most momentous in the Ballance of the Nation*. In your Twelfth, *That the Extirpation of the is most difficult and unprofitable*. And in your Thirteenth, *That all this your discourse for them, is neither threatening nor intimation of Rebellion*. I could wish, you had not mentioned these last words, for the very telling us, you do not threaten, after you have discoursed so largely of the number, momentousnesse, and weight of *Non-Conformists*, and withall of the impossibility of their extirpation, which was never yet thought of, Does deeply threaten. *Reform'd Christianity* must be settled in its

its *full extent*: this argues, that it is not yet done; Those who require it, are an *innumerable* people, *powerfull* and *momentous*, (which indeed they did demonstrate sufficiently but the other day, when they bare down all before them) and now being again debarr'd from the *Benefices* and *Fatness* of the Land, they esteem themselves ruin'd and extirpated: and yet they cannot be extirpated; because it is neither good nor *feasable*; not *feasable*, and therefore, cannot; not good and profitable, and therefore will not: all this you say, and yet if any think you threaten in all this, he is much mistaken; you do not use to threaten, before you strike, nor strike, before you find evidently you can prevail, and strike home.

But what is the Cause of all this Dissatisfaction, disgust, and disorder here amongst us? Because *Reform'd Christianity is not settled and cherished in its due extent*. O Sir, ought you not here to have expressed plainly and cleerly what you mean by *Pure reformed Christianity*, and what is the *due and right extent* thereof? This is the great and only work you had to doe, which you dissemble and neglect, and only tell us in general, *That the line of this extent must be the measure of all mens Zeal; That this will advance Gods Kingdome and the Churches Glory: That this will promote the designs of Gospel, being true Protestantisme in its Latitude: this is all can be gathered from you: what is then the Latitude, what the right extent of Reformed Christianity? it is, say you, A measure extended in its right Latitude, for God and the Churches Glory: what is it? It is a Latitude cherished unto its extent according to the designs of Gospel: thus you enlighten us; what do we hear by all this, but what Protestant Conformists, and Non-Conformists, Papists*
and

and all say as well as you, and yet the Land is never a whit the wiser. But you think, more then you speak, as wise ones use to doe: and speak indeed like an awful Legislator, that is modelling a Plat-form of government within himself, and we must not know what you doe, till you have done it. I may indeed conjecture your meaning, and think you would only have the *Presbyterians* included within this line of Communication, and *true extent of Reformed Christianity*: so that made equal with the Reverend Bishops, they may Preach in Pulpits, what now they utter in darkness; and by their Vocal Zeal, render *Episcopacy* first *unnecessary*, then *inexpedient*, and at length *Antichristian*. But I will not use any conjecture of my own, nor understand any more then you would have me; only give me leave to tell you, unto your no lesse satisfaction, then what you have given us, That *Reformed Christianity* is already settled, rooted, and cherished in the Land unto its due extent, unto its true Latitude, unto the right measure of Zeal, that will advance Gods Kingdome and the Churches Glory, promote virtue, and all the designs of Gospel, in the very best reformed way, which is, *Protestantisme* in its just and proper Latitude. What you propose to be done (as not done) is done already, so that all your Discourse, Ratiocination and Legislation, for ought I see yet, is needless.

- Q. II. In your Eleventh *Señ*. you tell us (as is before mention'd) How *momentous in the Nation*, *Non-Conformists* are: and now we may well expect to hear, whether all this *momentous People* be within the pretended extent of *Reformed Christianity*, or no, and who these *momentous people* be; but no such matter; your discourse is large and wide as they are, telling us they are every where spread amongst the Nobility, Gentry, and Trading party

party, in no small ranks and relations, called Fools by some, and pitied by others, and this is all ; enough indeed to augment our fears, but our knowledge is but where it was.

Your Twelfth Section pretends to strike a smart blow; and your Thirteenth Section sayes it is not smart at all: something you have to say, and in the verie saying of it, you would have us to believe it is nothing. *Violence* (say you) *towards Non-conformists will do no good with them that are a rational, willing People (to dispute and disobey the Government of Church and State) numerous, momentous, sober, and peaceable men (sufficiently experienced in the late times) in whom no small part of the Nations sobriety, frugality, and industry doth reside; who are not the Wasters, but mostly in the number of Getters (by plundering the whole Nation) with whom Trade will cease, the Vitals of the Land expire, Money grow scarce, Rents fall, and all for the loss of those men, who rule themselves wholly by that great Principle of Protestantism, Judgement of Discretion: Nor will there be found Magistrates to put such forceable wayes in execution upon them, to the terror of the whole Nation: Why do you then insinuate the suspicion of these fears? But we understand the figure of your stile in your whole Discourse, and do not question (by the assistance of God) but that the wisdom of His Majestie will obviate all the designs and threats of your Partie: in the mean time, Pray declare what Violence is either acted, or so much as thought of against those so rational, so willing, so sober, so peaceable, so momentous People? He that pretends a fear in himself, where no fear is, may well be suspected to contrive evil against his Neighbour, whom he pretends to be afraid of: Remember this, it is no secret propertie of Malice and Sedition, but well enough*

enough known ; we have not yet forgot *Jealousies and Fears*.

¶ 13.

But if any man, say you, in your Thirteenth Section, surmise, *That this Representation in your Discourse, is a challenge to the Higher Powers, and a demand of Liberty, and a Threatning if not granted, he is much mistaken. And why so? O say you, Rulers themselves must be ruled by Reason, or do worse. And so must their Subjects too, or else all will go ill ; but which is the Reason Paramount in this case, that of Subjects ? or their Rulers? But how doth this rid us of the fears you latelie put us in? Rulers must know their People ; who is ignorant of that? and yet it were to be wished they did not know too near and sensibly some of their ill qualities, which were better stifled : Alas these Dissenters know they should have patience, and stand in their stations ; 'tis true ; but knowing and doing are two things, and so is it likewise to stand in their stations in their own Houses, and in a Camp. Their Discomposure may speak Woe and Misery, not Wars and Tumults. Marry Sir, Woe and Miserie is too much : but all our Woe and Miserie hath hitherto proceeded from Wars and Tumults, as their original issue ; and if you assure us of the like Effect, we may well dread the like Cause. Their sullen Mutinies make no noise, though they may loosen all the joints and ligaments of Policy. They have not any Convulsive motions, though they may bring a Paralitick or Hectick distemper, or Atrophy, or stop the current of vital blood in the veins of the State. O hold Sir, your heart runs over too abundantly : And is this your Rhetorick of persuading us to fear nothing from this sober, peaceable, rational, and willing People ; because the Discomposure they are in, will bring nothing but Woe and Misery ; their sullen Mutinies only loosning the joints and ligaments of Policy :*

Policy : their momentous issue will bring only a Paraletick or Hætick distemper, &c. nothing else, no not any thing else : You cannot surely but smile in your own bosome, whilst you use such frightful horrors and dreadful expectations as these, to acquit us of fear. Do you esteem all these dismal Events upon a Nation as Trifles? And are your sober, peaceable, rational and willing People ready to *do all this without regret*, as things of no moment amongst their momentous progeny? Surely, had you not already moulded every thing amongst your selves unto your own satisfaction, so that you are now ready, as you phrase it your self, *to stand in your stations*, you would not yet have dropt from your Pen, these your most villanous and impious demissions : let me prophesie for once, however plausible and facile the means you have projected may appear now unto you, you will miss of your end (as you have once already through the infinite mercie of Almighty God to this poor Nation) and fall your selves into these heaveie miseries, which you mention as slight things, by way of derision to the State and Kingdom.

To prevent all these inconveniencies and miseries, your Legislative prudence tells us, *That all that are thought fit to abide with security* (so that it seems there are some you think fit to force again into Exile, though you will not now name them) *may be reduced to three sorts*; you would first have an established order made up of such as are proportionable to the ends of Church and State; secondly, a limited Toleration of some others; and thirdly, a discreet Connivance to the rest, according to charity and safety. But who shall be placed in the first, and who in the other ranks, must be concealed, till the time of acting in particular, what here you word in general, be in season : And although a vulgar man can hardly distinguish betwixt

Tolleration and Connivance ; yet distinguished they must be, for you will have three sorts I suppose ; although you never speak it your self, in respect to three states of *Dissenters*, *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, and *Quakers*, &c. *Presbyterians* you would have put into the *comprehensive state* with *Episcopal Protestants* settled and established and cherished by Law. The *Independents* are only to be tolerated, but with careful restrictions, that they come not too near the Line. The *Quakers* to be wisely and charitably commended at, as rules of safety may suggest. And you take this your rule, it may be, from the consideration of the Rainbow, which hath three chief colours in it ; the Pumicious or Yellow-colour gilds the outward and greater semicircle, refracted from the least Opacitie : the Green tincture is in the middle, refracted from a meaner thickness of matter ; the Purple is the interior of the least semicircle, and therefore so much the darker : for stronger is the action of the Luminous bodie in the outward Periphery, and greater the Opacitie in the inward, and a mean of both in the middle. The *Presbyterian* must be put in the outward and greater Circle with the *Episcopal Protestants*, here called the *comprehensive state*, or *established and cherished order*, as next to the firmament : The less lightsom and greenish *Independent*, must be in the middle state of *Tolleration*, as further from God : And the *Quaker*, who professeth himself to be the only pure light, must be content with the lower Rim of *discreet connivance*, which being nearest the earth, hath more of Opacitie in it, and less of light. If you do not mean this, pray tell us what you mean ; I am sure you would have the fine Yellow *Presbyterian* to be in the Circle of *comprehensive approbation*, or else your whole Book signifies just nothing.

Now

Now, to let us know something more of your mind, as §. 15. far as generalities will go, concerning this *Established Order* stated in its *due Latitude*, you tell us here, and in your Sixteen and Seventeen Sections, three words more: The first is, *That this established Order must be sure to be made wide enough, that it may take in so many as may be able to controul all the rest; those forms of men which use to be imposed on the Consciences of those who enter in, being so far made void, that they may neglect them without offence, and hold only to indisputable Truths, and indispensable Duties.* This is in plain English, to let the *Presbyterians* come within the line of Communication and favour with the Episcopal Divines now cherished, and all the rest kept out, that they may have some bodie under them to controul: But why should any be kept out, that use the very same Plea for themselves which you now do; and if you once proceed so far as to give any reason for their Exclusion, you shall find that they have already used the same for yours: But you will not be in Heaven, except you may have some bodie *there* to controul, and trample on: You first were begotten and born with this controuling spirit, and if it should once fail, you would be no more your selves; let me tell you a secret, To controul and trample upon Inferiours, is but a *Presbyterians* Propertie; but to controul Superiours, is his very Essence and Nature.

Your second word is, *That the Dissenters who desire to be included in this Comprehensive state, under the paternal favour and care of Magistrates* (Presbyterians you mean) *are very capable of such an inclusion, as being those whose Principles are fitted for Government and Doctrine according to Godliness, and so ready to cement with the Church of England, which is true in substance, though defective in* §. 16.

Discipline and Rules compiled by men, which the true Sons of the Church cannot swallow. They allow of true Episcopacy as ballanced with Presbiters : They admit of a Liturgy, and are satisfied in their judgments concerning the lawfulness of it, and Ceremonies too, if consonant to the Word and Rules of Scripture ; the time was when you threw us into blood about it ; but it is well, if the miraculous hand of God in restoring the Church, hath convinced your judgments ; but I doubt 'tis but conditionally, if you may be admitted. And you say, It is our misery, that the favoured Party will never condescend, but still trample upon the rest. But Sir, we perceived but lately, that you would not your selves be otherwise favoured, than that you might have some left out to trample on. But as to that favoured part, unto whose Societic you would be taken, you let them know in this word of yours, That you mean still to think as you have thought, and speak and act as you have done hitherto ; but yet notwithstanding you are very capable of that their Association, because they giving an example of Moderation, must condescend to let you (the wisest of Dissenters) sit upon their Benches, whilst you are wilfully resolved to condescend and comply with them in nothing : The Church of England never excepted against your Principles and Doctrines which be conform to Government and Godliness : What you disavow, what you have railed at so unjustly, and your implacableness in your own wayes, which it is unknown to this day, whither they will tend, or in what they can rest. This is the only impediment of your favour : and your general caution of your own holiness, sobriety, justice and industry (all which we have fully experimented) is no recantation of this, nor any real way of Sociation.

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Your third word is, *That such a Condescension to a widened Establishment, is the safety of Religion.* This is a great word and comfortable, if it be true: that we may therefore the more readily believe it, you tell us, *That a sound Church as Englands is, cannot so easily be hurt by the abatement of a few rigours in themselves but indifferent, and so esteemed by the wiser Dissenters (Presbyterians you mean)* who can easily let them pass in such as will use such little things, or of some of them, they can bear with others in the practice of some things, which themselves cannot practice: and they can submit to some things, which they cannot approve; not for unworthy ends, but for Conscience sake; without engaging therefore in troubles, whereof none knows the issue: that is, if you may be admitted, else you will roar out upon them, and they that use them. The wiser Dissenters are men without all doubt better taken in by Authority into the Established order of favour and protection, than left out with the other people of more unmanageable and instable principles, to increase the reputation of their Party. This indeed doth sound like something of safety: the fewer Rebels, the securer our Peace; and where is most of Peace, our safety is there the greater. But all this is understood, if these Dissenters now to be admitted into societie and friendship, have laid down those seeds of Disagreement and Dissention (which hitherto have kept them asunder before this their admission.) Upon these very Motives, which you now say are *Formalities, Petty matters, Indifferent and Trifling things*, you did voluntarily first separate your selves, and inferr'd a War which ruin'd the whole Land; let your Books and Writings be brought forth, they will testifie, that you accounted and called those *Motives, Weighty and Fundamental* for the justifying of your Wars and Broyls; which now for the making up
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§. 17.

§. 15.

P. 31.

of your Association, You say are *but small and indifferent, and no wayes fit to hinder so much happines and safety, as the said Association would bring to Religion and the Nation.* For the obtaining now of favour and protection amongst the Bishops (set up again by the Magistrate) after you by force of Arms had cast them down, all those differences you would bring with you, are very *minutulous and indifferent*, which to overthrow them formerly, were *great Christian and Momentous truths.* How comes this to pass? are you changed men? no, the very same, of the same animositie, and in the same mind: and all those points which differences you from the Episcopal Protestant, are now *momentous and weighty* with you, just as they were then: And they were then *indifferent and meer Trifles*, just as they are now. For they were then indifferent and small in order to the Bishops yielding and condescension unto you, and your whole Partie therein, and so they are still; but in order unto your condescension unto them, your Bishops and Shepherds, the very same points wherein they require your compliance, *O they are deadly and needles Choke-pears, which you cannot swallow; they are Popish Rites, besides Holy Scripture; they are Forms of men, and not of God; they are racks, and ruinous scandals to weak Consciences;* and so they were then: nor is there any more change in you, than in *Aesop's Fox*, who by force worried the Pullen, when he had them in his reach; and when he found them safely roosted, he persuaded them by kindest words, that they might be all together, for that he loved them all in *Visceribus suis.* And if the Bishops will but pull you up to them, because they think it not convenient to come down to you, we shall soon see how dearly you love them, and how quickly the frozen Serpent being warm'd in their bosome, will hiss and sting

P. 32.
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sting both them and us ; but of this we shall perceive more in your following Discourse.

But why do you choose this Legislative way intermixt with supplications, for the obtaining of an End which you lately compassed so successfully by the Swords of your industrious, ready, and willing People ? O, you sigh us out the reason hereof in most compassionate tones : *The miser sort of Dissenters (Presbyterians) say you, whose Conformity were they gain'd, would most avail (for what ?) are weary of these strifes, they dread the consequence of changings, the hurrying into other extreams, and the wilde excursions of some spirits ; they would not be left again to the late uncertainty and continual vacillations in Government : and they have long since seen the manifold errors committed in the Policy of the late times : they know that such unfixed liberty would not secure them ; and therefore it may be well thought, they would accept reasonable terms, and rest satisfied therein.*

TO For all this, the Nation well enough perceives, that you ~~the~~ *miser sort of Dissenters*, are as readie now for War in your minds, as you were 28 Years ago, when it was first begun, and prospered in your hands : for you walk not any longer now in the dark, as then you did ; you have the same resolution ; greater purses, by plundering and cheating the whole Nation ; more men educated already in your principles, and train'd up to your hands : and, which is the sum of all, a greater probability now of Victorie, than before you durst promise to your selves. Why then do you not proceed prosperously ; and endeavour to get by strength, that authoritie and power, for which you do now so whiningly pray and supplicate ? O ! there is a *weighty* and *momentous* reason for it, which you have not yet told us plain enough : Is it your inclination
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and love to Peaceableness? Love to your poor Countrie which you are loth to see any more imbroyl'd? Fear of success? No: shall I tell it you? wonder you needs must, how I got into your heart to find out your meaning; for your meaning once found out, will enable us sufficiently to understand your words; but your words will never guide us sufficiently to find out your meaning: It is this; You wise Dissenters do now seriously consider, that after you had betrayed the People into the waste of so much Time, Treasure, and Blood, in your last victorious War, enterprised for the rooting out of those *damnable unchristian Points and Practices in the Church of England*; which now to currie favour with the same Partie (after strange Revolutions set up again by the miraculous hand of God) you call *Trifling, and Indifferent things*: in that very nick of time, when you looked to receive the reward of your triumphant malice (the Victorie now wholly obtain'd, and the English Church and State then under your feet) it pleased God in his just judgment, for your Hypocrisie to Him, Treason and Sedition against the Church your Mother, and the King your Father, to let that Bodie of *Puritans* (whereof you were the leading part) to shiver imperceivably into several pieces, and the simpler part thereof (called afterwards *Independents*) to cast you the wiser part (then and ever since called *Presbyterians*) out of the Saddle: So that you reaped nothing considerable (besides the plundering the Nation) to what you expected, for your ten Years policie, sweat, and labour: And that very same Authoritie which then did back you, did, by the just judgment of God, so refine it self, by casting out their Members, which were judged by the rest not pure enough for their Design, that at last it dwindled into nothing: And you have now lived to see
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the same Church and State settled again, and cherished by the Magistrates (to the infinite satisfaction of all honest and sober men) which you had overthrown as you thought for evermore. And this is the only thing you dread again, here expressed by your self in such general words, as before we did not, but now do wholly understand : *You fear strifes ; the consequence of changings ; the hurrying into extremes ; the excursion of some spirits ; the uncertainty and vacillations in Government, unfix'd Liberty, &c.* All this fear, in one word, is, lest you be frustrated of your end as you was before : And you have very good reason to fear it ; for why may not the Body of *Presbyterians* drop into several parts, to undermine and ruine themselves (after the Victory obtain'd) by piecemeals, till the last drop left alone, dry up, or be consumed by other second causes, as well as the Body of *Puritans* then did ? And therefore you think it better (all things rightly considered) rather than fight again with so much expence to an uncertain event (and it may be, become liable to pay for the mischief you have formerly done) to entreat the Clergy that they would be pleased out of their own great love and bounty, to make you partakers of what they enjoy : For, it is but *a little thing, a trifle, a thing meer inaisferent, a very nothing that differences you and them : All Sacred Truths ; All Indispensable Duties ; All Established Principles ; All Divine Rules of Sacraments, Prayers, and Worship ; All indisputable Verities,* they all agree in most harmoniously : and the other little, small, indifferant, petty things, let them not be imposed to the Churches distemper and religious damage. Here is the sum and secret of the wise *Dissenters* ; They would not be thought yet fully resolved to raise any more Wars, because it prospered with them so ill before ; nor threaten, as they did ;

nor exaggerate the weightiness of the Cause as they did; but try now for a while some contrary Topick means, that for ought they know, may speed better. Their End indeed, (which is their own Profit,) is the same it was; but the means to obtain it, is new, *viz. Humble Supplications*: and that which hinders this Union, (which in Processe of our late Wars) were *Fundamental Points*, and *the very Vitals of Christianity*, yet they must be called in this calmer way, *Indifferent little things*: for things that are begged must be called *little*, though they are never so *great*; but when they are demanded by force, they must be named *Great*, though never so *little*. The doubt that our Reverend Bishops may justly have, is, Whether a Condescension to incorporate you into their own Sphere, may not prove ruinous to their own Clergy, and the whole State: for whilst you are below as Suppliants, your differences are *little*; but when you are in power, they will be then *momentous* again: And so the established Government of the Church, must perish by their own good liking.

§. 18. After you have now pretty well seated your self in your own firmament (as you think it) you utter two words in this *Session* unto such as you left in a Region below you, gaping there for Tolleration and Connivence; and in it you deliver us your Rule, and in your Nineteenth your Counsel. Your Rule is, *That other Dissenters (besides you wise ones) although they may have taken in some Principles of Church government lesse congruous to National Settlement) be not oppressed, but have their liberty, yet not an inordinate one, but limited by the safety of true Religion in general, and of the established order*: Here you are Lording it already over your Brethren Dissenters, whilst you are assuring them, that you would

would not be a means of exposing them to oppression, contempt, and hatred; but would admit their Plea, as far as it would go: (which you intend to be judge of:) For if God hath received them (say you) why should their fellow servants (ah humble Soul!) reject or afflict them causelessly? but if your heart after Legislative Prudence shall think and declare, that God hath *not* received them, then woe be to them and their Plea. This is all the assurance you give of your moderation, when you shall come into Power; and all the Rule you lay down to us for Tolleration, and Connivence, leaving us to guess what you mean in particular by this your Tolleration, how it's distinguished from Connivence, who should be connived at, and who tollerated, and wherein may consist this *safety of Religion*, and the *established Order*, by which the Tolleration must be measured. But before we proceed further, pray let me ask you, how comes it to pass, that you being but a Part of the Dissenters, should pretend any preeminence over the rest of the Dissenters, and by what right do you pretend to measure out their Tolleration and Connivence more then they doe yours? Doe you think that these Dissenters, who ever they be, have not the same Plea, that you have, for their more favourable Tolleration and Connivence which you allot them? They have, and use the same, in your own words, and say, that consequently their *Profession and way is not to be streighned* according to your pragmatikal and simple Tolleration and Connivence: so likewise doe they humbly shew, that this their Plea, is no threatening to Rulers, nor intimation of Rebellion; and a little more humbly too then you doe, for standing wholly upon that main Principle of Protestantisme the judgment of Discretion, there is none of the other Dissenters (besides your selves) that say

That the discomposure they are in, shall bring woe and misery, that their sullen mutinies shall loosen the joints and ligaments of Policy: but using your meeker Phrases, acknowledge, That to abide in their Stations, to have patience under grievances, to sweeten their Governours by humility and modesty, is their best security. And they plead with your selves, That if any thing hath been amiss in their Practices or Principles; that a looking back to former discords, mars the most hopefull redintegration. All the Excuses which you use for the many enormous Principles and Practices of Presbyterians; the very same is the justification and excuse of all the other Dissenters, if they have been faulty in the like manner: And by all that, which is your own Plea, may those more innocent Dissenters (whether Independents or Quakers, &c.) hope as well as you, to be placed in the firmament of the Established order, and not to be left below by the meer judgment of their elder brother in iniquity, in the dark Regions of Tolleration and Connivence, where they are sure to be most tyrannically trampled upon, if Presbyterianism get the sway, for then instead of every Bishop that is put down in a Diocese, there will be set up a Pope (for absoluteness) in every parish.

But the same Principles and Practices must not wear the same colour in you, and in other men; others look hellish black, whilst you must be pure as cristal: in other men they are Oppressions, Crimes, Sedition, blood-shed, murther and devilish inhumanity; but in you the willing People, it is Piety, Zeal for the Lords Cause, Tenderness of Conscience, Care of Gospel Designs, Prudence, Love of publick Good; what others act or write amiss, is their damnable Religion; yours, but petty swervings from the way, if happily you did ever fall in such slippery places. Thus, *Plures cum faciunt idem, non est idem*. You can't therefore do amiss, because only you do it, nor others act

act well, because they are *others* and not *you* who act it.

In this Section, you advise Dissenters of narrow and rigid principles unto Moderation; that is to say, to be content with the *Tolleration and Connivence* you shall allow them. Doth this your counsel come from your heart? ought they in reason and conscience to acquiesce in it? They ought surely: then hear me; You are all now equally in the state of *Tolleration and Connivence*, nor have you the *wise Dissenters* any one word to say for your selves, but what the other have: I hope then, you will take your own counsel; though it issue from anothers mouth, it is your counsel still. Hear then the Church of *England* thus speaking in your own words unto *you wise Ones*, who can better understand the power of your own advice, than other Dissenters can. p. 19.

As Authority may be too prone to erre (most wise Dissenters) in the severity of imposing, so Subjects may be too wilful in refusing to obey. As an explicate assent, and approbation, may by Superiors be too rigidly exacted in doubtful things; so the unreasonable stiffness and harshness of Inferiors, may keep them from that compliance in practice, which their Conscience (becalm'd from passion and prejudice) would not gainsay. Every Christian should be deeply sensible of the common Interest of Reformed Christianity, which is incomparably more valuable than those private, and little narrow Models, which may have much of fancy and affection. Well-minded persons may easily be deceived touching their private sentiments in Religion: they may think they are under the uncontrollable sway of Conscience, when indeed they are but bound up by custom, education, complexion, interest, or some other kind of prejudice. The prudent and sober should not easily settle upon such Opinions as will never settle the Nation, but tend rather to infinite perplexity and
dis-

discomposure : Howsoever we will not bear too hard upon any thing that may fairly pretend to Conscience, which though erroneous, should not be harshly dealt with. Nevertheless (when all is said) some dissatisfaction doth invincibly possess the judgment, in that case, Christian humility and charity, as well as discretion, adviseth such persons to acquiesce in their private security and freedom, and not to reach after that liberty that may unsettle the Publick order, and undermine the common safety.

§. 14.
P. 28.
l. 10.

This is your Nineteenth Section, advising your under Dissenters (as you esteem them) to Moderation: and it is the Churches advice to you, pray take it, since you confess, *That such is the complicated condition of humane Affairs, that it is exceeding difficult to devise a Rule or Model that shall provide for all whom equity will not plead for: therefore the prudent and sober will acquiesce in any constitution, that is in some good sort proportionable to the ends of Government.*

Nay, nay, the Case is altered (quoth Ploydon) you will say presently, That was our counsel to other men, and then it signified *something*; but it signifies *nothing* now, when it is given by others to us: indeed you speak but what you think, if you speak thus: All your own *actions* are *just and virtuous*, your own *words* *powerful and efficacious*; but the same things spoken by other men, are *fruitless*; and the same deeds when other men act them, are *abominable, ungodly, and devilish*. But you see in the interim how alike unsuccessful wise Presbyterians are both in their writing and fighting: They war most stoutly, but *O Fortuna Presbyteriana!* the Victory is no sooner got, but another (then unthought of) comes between them and home, and takes away the Garland: They write most politickly, but *O Fortuna!* all their whole Discourse
so

so subtilly contriv'd, pleads for them, they intended to oppose : One would think the two Elders in *Daniel* who accused innocent *Susanna*, were their first Fathers, they have the same fortune with them in whatsoever they do : to seek for Renown, and thereby to be ashamed and confounded ; to accuse others, and with the same breath to condemn themselves. There might be much more of this nature pick'd out of your Discourse for your self-condemnation, but I must hasten to your conclusion.

p. 20.

This Section pretends to shew, *That the Presbyterians exaltation in the widened Establishment, is the interest of the King.* But no body that reads it, can find the least argument towards the evincing the point : for it is wholly taken up in excusing and colouring over the wicked principles and practices of Presbyterians : for, you say, *That the arraignment of the Non-conformists supposed principles may happily proceed upon mistakes ; and, that they and others inclinable to their way ; are by some charged with such principles as detract much from Kingly Power and Dignity, and tend to advance Popular Faction :* For their vindication, you say, *'Tis confessed, they have been eager Assertors of Legal Liberties :* Doth this acquit them from the charge, or doth it not rather deeply charge you, and all that are of such an opinion, before the great God, for stiling the late bloody and rebellious Wars, an assertion only of Legal Liberties ? If you had proved the mistake, you had done something : but seeing you could not, I commend you for saying, *That a looking back to former Discords, wars the most hopeful Redintegration ; Acts of Indemnity are Acts of Oblivion, and must be so observed :* which is the reason I do not give you such an answer to many parts of your Discourse as you justly deserve : but whether you may not be justly charged with the said accusation, I leave it

P.35.
l.I.

P.41.
l.21.

to be seriously considered by the Reader ; for you alledge in this Section, *That the Non-conformists profess much affection to Monarchy, and the Royal Family : And that they are so well satisfied, as none more, in the Ancient Fundamental constitution of this Kingdom :* If so, how came it to pass, you declared in your former part of your Discourse so cunningly and cautiously in these words, *That the Ministers of the Presbyterian persuasion, do heartily acknowledge His Majesty to be Supreme Governour over all Persons, and over all Things and Causes in these His Dominions :* If you had dealt ingenuously without any Presbyterian mental reservation, you would have said, *Over all Persons, and over all Causes, as well Ecclesiastical as Civil :* then we had understood you ; but we are well satisfied how *Anti-Monarchical Presbyterianism* is : And if you are so well satisfied in the ancient fundamental Constitution of this Kingdom, what means your whole pragmatistical Legislative Discourse, wherein the factious and seditious Models that you have cast in your supercilious Noddle, are proposed as sufficient to persuade the changing the fundamental Constitution of the Kingdom, especially of the Church, which hath been *established* by the wisdom of so many Parliaments : but the reason of this boldness, you ingenuously confess in this Section, when you say, *That as some set their wits a work in framing, so do others in evading the designs of such Engagements ;* which are no less than the Laws of the Land in this particular : which I could advise you (for Conscience sake, if there is any Obedience to be paid to the Higher Powers, and what they enact) to bear more Reverence and Obedience to, and not so seditiously endeavour their overthrow, otherwise you may chance meet with the Goats Fate described in the Poet,

Rode

Rode Caper vitem, tamen hinc cum stabis ad aras

In tua quod fundi cornua possit, erit.

Then according to your own words, *The condition of the* Pag. 41.
Dissatisfied (because they wilfully and seditiously will be so) l. 33.
 may without damage or just scandal to any, be made such, that
 they shall not long for changes, but gladly embrace present
 things, and then the implacably evil minded will want matter
 to work upon, and rest without hope of disturbing the Publick
 Peace: which your seditious insinuation so cunningly ende-
 vours, when you give us in this Section the Character
 of the People of England in these words, *The English (in* Pag. 42.
general) are an ingenuous and open-hearted People; and if un- l. 23.
luckie accidents discompose them not, they are of themselves
disposed to have their Kings in great veneration. Is not
 this a huge piece of Rhetorick to persuade His Majesty,
 that the approbation and exaltation of *Presbiterians* is his
 own great Interest? if it bears any sense or construction,
 it must speak thus, *Presbiterians profess much affection to*
Monarchy, and the Royal Family, and have the King in great
veneration; but if He grant not what they demand, they
 will not do it: they have stiffly both by Pen and Sword,
 resisted and opposed all Authority; and if He will not do
 what they will have Him, it will prove *an unluckie accident*
that shall discompose them, and put them quite besides it;
 and then we must expect (if not *Wars and Tumults* as we
 have had) yet *Woe and Misery.* Thus, forsooth, is esta-
 blished the Kings Interest.

In the next place you pretend to demonstrate *the Church* §. 21.
and Clergies interest and benefit by the Legal Establishment of
Presbiterians. But here, as you did before, you bring no
 argument to the Point; but having to deal with the Cler-
 gy more in this Section, than in any other, you lay about
 you like a mad man, vilifying them as reproach unto the

E

Church,

Church, telling us, *That the more considerate Sons of the Church do observe and bewail such dangerous miscarriages by Simony, Pluralities, Non-residency, and Profaneness, as threaten a second downfall: That if the Church would flourish, the Bishops must not be the head of such Ministers, as for Ignorance and Lewdness are a scandal and scorn to their Neighbours, &c.* I suppose you mean *your selves* for the more considerate Sons of the Church, and therefore you should have done well to have named who are so guilty, and where they are, that they might receive their reward: but I hope it only proceeds from your malice, which is very hot against the Bishops and Clergy, witness these your words, *It is taken for granted, that neither Conscience nor Interest will permit the Bishops and Clergy of England, to unite to the See of Rome. Their Doctrine is too pure, and their judgment too clear for a full compliance with Popery: Here you imitate Archers, who draw back the Arrow, that they may wound with a greater force; you vindicate their Conscience and Interest, their Doctrine, and their Judgment; and yet most maliciously wound them with your full compliance: There are more of this nature which I shall let pass, and observe how with the same breath you magnifie your selves, saying, Presbyterian Ministers are Godly and Learned, able and apt to teach the People: (by experience we know what) styling your selves Labourers in the service of the Lord of the Harvest: The chief Shepherds faithful servants: Orthodox and pious Ministers: Godly and peaceable men, preaching only the indubitable truths of Christianity: Men of known moderation, &c.* One would wonder at your impudent partiality, and your shameless, malicious scandals, if you did not presently discover your design in them, when you say, *The Religion of any State will sink, if it is not held up in its venerable estimation*

Page. 20.
130.

mation amongst the People. By these actions of you, and your Party, the World doth take notice, what men are cast out, and why, and thinks it is the honour, strength, and safety of the Church, that such men be numbred amongst their opposites; who can with Conscience pretend, That it is sincerely wished, that the Clergie may hold their state in safety and honour; that they may never be laid low for want of meet Revenue or Dignity; and in the very next Page propose the cutting off some Luxuriences from some of the Highest Order: and the sharing among many what is ingrossed by a few. Now we fully understand you: hitherto I confess I was amazed (although I well knew what were the Motives that moved you to procure our late Troubles) what could be the chief drift in your design, seeing you here sincerely wished, That the Clergie might hold their state in safety and honour: and that you so often in your Discourse declared, that the things of difference between you and the Church were so inconsiderable, that you professed you could bear with others in the practice of them, although you could not practice them yourselves; and that you could submit to some things which you cannot approve, and that not for unworthy ends, but for Conscience sake: That you acknowledged also, That the Presbyterians generally (by which it is evident you are not all of a mind, nor ever will be) held the Church of England to be a true Church, &c. and therefore that they did frequent the Worship of God in the Publick Assemblies: And that many that press earnestly after further Reformation (which it seems is never to have an end) do yet communicate as well in the Sacraments, as the Word preached, and Prayer, &c. and therefore for divers reasons you lay down, you say, It may be well thought they would accept reasonable terms, and rest satisfied therein. O! would you again be sing'ring the Revenues of the Church?

Church? are these the *reasonable terms*, which your avarice calls a *moderation*? because I believe you will say, you would but share with them, and yet cannot but suspect the great danger and damage which may be dreaded to ensue this *moderation*; Why? did ever danger and damage ensue *moderation*? Yes, such an one as this is, to the overthrow of Church and State, and therefore it may be dreaded again; but you think, you sufficiently secure us from that fear, by telling us, *That nevertheless it may possibly not ensue it*; a pretty argument, and here you give us a better, when you say, that by letting you have their Revenues, and by eclipsing their dignities, *Thus may the Clergie enjoy an Estate of Power, Plenty, and Honour, with less Envy, and hazard of undermining*: This argument is thus far true, *Cantabit vacuus, &c.*

In all probability the Ape in *Æsop* by such arguments as these persuaded the Beasts in the Forrest to cut off their Tayles. In the Twelve last lines of this *Section*, You summe up the main drift of your whole design, viz. *The settling (or rather the unsettling) the Church, in a due Extent, that it may encompass so much as may inable it to Vanquish whatsoever is inconsistent with it, and to keep within compass whatsoever may be Tollerated under it. And next, by cutting off the Luxuriences of some that are in the Highest Order, you mean to reduce Episcopacy into a Presidency ballanced or managed by a due commixtion of Presbyters; which doth not undermine Episcopacy, nor insinuate any other form of Government instead of it, as you promised in your Preface, and yet in the very last line of this Section, you imply (and which is too apparent) that your Envy is Undermining it. I shall further observe, because it hath relation to the Clergie, that in your*
Fifteenth

Fifteenth Section you say, *As for the Established Order, we presume not here to intermeddle with the form or species of Church Government: and in your Sixteenth Section, The asserting of your Discipline is not here intended; in this we may believe you, for both these are reserved to be presumed to be done, when you shall be settled in your Power, and none shall dare to contradict you, and then have at all.*

This *Section* presumes to persuade the Gentry and Nobility, that it is their Interest also: but if you had here set down the first Chapter of *Genesis* at large, instead of this your discourse, they might happily have discerned thence some consequence or reason why it should be their Interest, but in your discourse none at all, except you mean that your advancement should bring with it a Levelling of the whole Kingdom, as well as the Church; for so we know that every Hill must be brought low, when every Valley is exalted. But as Metals are not better known by their sound, then the Spirits of some men by their words, I shall in short observe how seditiously you endeavour in this *Section* to sow Division; First you say, *The Latitude and Liberty here discoursed, is thought to give too great advantage to the Citizens and the Commonality, as also to make all sorts of men more knowing and less servile; and consequently less obsequious to the wills of great men.* Here you insinuate to the People, that by this Settlement you propose, they shall receive great advantage, and be absolutely free. Next you say, *The doubt is, whether the Nobles and Gentlemen of England can maintain their Authority and Splendor, with the freedom of Citizens and the Common People: And it may be, the Higher degrees in England, would never be so advanced, as some have conceived, if the*

the meaner sort were reduced to the condition of the French Peasantry : These are your seditious pretended (not real) doubts, which false surmises you would have the People also to doubt and concert, and then to believe that this your whimsical Proposition (if effected) would secure them from the danger; but your own immediate words are a sufficient answer to such doubts, for you say, Surely in the times of their Ancestors, they were in as much splendor and power, as they have been in the memory of this Age; and yet in those times both Citizens and Peasantry were rich and free, brave and worthy in their own rank. This sufficiently proves that the one hath not been so much as doubted, nor the other in the least thought of; or endeavoured to be effected, because the Nobles and Gentry have maintained their Authority and Splendor, and yet the Citizens and Common People are now richer and freer than they were formerly.

The rest of your Section is an impertinent Discourse, endeavouring to level the Gentry with the Citizens and Traders, and most pragmatically to teach them what Habit they shall wear, and how they must carry themselves in their Countries; all which are suggestions pretending to take away all Emulation between them, but with malicious aggravations endeavours to raise divisions between them. We need not wonder why you do it, for from the Mythologie of the Fable of Medea sowing Serpents teeth, which grew up armed men (mutually wounding one another) you learn't first by the invenomed bitings of your malice, to set us formerly together by the ears; and from that success, you are encouraged to hope, and attempt it again. Doubts cause wise men to suspend their assents, but makes the Vulgar presently yield theirs to them, which is the reason you threw in these, that you might continue and increase

crease the melancholly mistakes of the People, by fomenting new jealousies amongst them : so that by raising again the winds of a general discontent, and then being unguarded by the confusion of another storm, you might more easily set up your selves : By such Cunnings, the Multitude may be carried above the perception of their understanding, contrary to what Religion would persuade them ; but then we have seen by experience, that being once shaken in some Opinion, of which they had a reverence, they presently fall into the same uncertainty of the other parts of their belief, which had no more authority with them, than those which were already shaken in them. We have sufficiently experimented how by destroying Charity, and disuniting the continuity of Faith, how it begot diversity of Opinions, which produced different Sects, whose Dissensions have been so mazed in the Errors of their own confusions, that at last they reduced Religion to be almost nothing but believing some few Propositions tending only to the overthrow of Church and State ; which was quickly effected, and the *Presbyterians* (who were the Authors of it) presently thrown by, as it was expected, because it is the nature of the Vulgar (who erre alwayes in the extremes) to despise all humane Laws, when they are once misled in those which are Divine.

Lastly, You tell us here, *That your own comprehensive Latitude (or Altitude rather) would heal our Breaches, and put an end to our Disturbances, and therefore your Exaltation will be the security of us all.* But here you ought to remember, that half the Dissenters (that is all, besides you the wise Ones) are left out, and excluded by you, from this Line of the comprehensive State.

Will they cause no disquiet ? none at all, you may warrant us that well enough, for all the other Parties are but still

still called up by the Alarm of *Presbyterians* to rebell; and when they are quieted, all will be then in peace; if otherwise, let all men hear and tremble at your threatening, *The severities of Law against Dissenters*, may at length come home to them and theirs who take themselves to be far out of the reach thereof: This is like you, you are for Revenge to the third and fourth generation.

And now the Reverend Bishops are to make their choice, whether they will stand in fear of the rising of these portentous *Exhalations*, that cause so much disturbance; or draw them up by the Sun of their favour into this Region of *Exaltation*, to lighten there and thunder; for *Presbyterians* whether high or low, can never rest: *Inferiours* they must oppress, *Equals* they will controul; and all *Superiority* they cast down: What is under them, must look continually to be disturbed; and all that is over them, they undermine; which is the reason that *their way was never yet obtain'd in England, nor were they ever favoured with the Magistrates vigorous aid, so much as for an accommodation with the Established Polity*: Keep them below, and they threaten; set them on high, and they thunder, and that in a frightful manner: In a word, they are violent in every place, because they have in this World no natural place of their own: and they seem to be born to do mischief to others, but no good to themselves; for as the wisest of Kings saith, *He that troubles his own house, shall inherit the wind*.

Finally (as you say) *Our Breaches are too well known, and make little for our reputation or advantage in Foreign Parts. About things impertinent, Contention should cease.*
 Pag. 22. *It strengthens the common Adversary, who is irreconcilable.*
 l. 16. *Why do you continue them? Why do you raise them about*
 Pag. 21. *such indifferent things? You confess, The Reformation in*
 l. 15. *England*

England for its Legality and Orderliness, is unquestionable. *Pag. 17.*
 Why do you dispute it? You confess, That by needles *l. 22.*
Schisms and Factions to weaken the common interest of Re- *Pag. 21.*
formed Christianity, is to dissipate the Church of God, and to *l. 19.*
defeat the great ends of Christian Religion. You say, You *Pag. 37.*
are weary of these strifes: Why do you begin them again? *l. 6.*
 You sufficiently know the woful Catastrophies they have
 produced, because you have been an Actor in them : and
 therefore now to begin the same designs again ; as such
 actions used to be judged the worse for having no Paral-
 lel, they are now more justly to be aggravated by the ex-
 ample of your former practices of the same nature ; e-
 specially considering the great Clemency that hath not on-
 ly pardoned them, but commanded their oblivion, where
 they had lain in silence, if your Discourse had not brought
 them into memory.

To conclude, although you are pleased to beg the ques-
 tion, when you say, *The chief Prejudices have been con-*
sidered; and these three important Interests being known
aright, are found not to oppose, but to require this Latitude
of Religion. How honestly and satisfactorily you have
 performed it, I leave to the judgment of the impartial
 Reader ; and shall only further observe, that by your
 words (*if all these Interests are rightly known*) it seems
 you have in reserve another great Point (no less than the
 true interest of *Church and State*, and consequently the
 whole Government) to be better stated, and otherwise
 to be disputed, although already established by so many
 Laws, when you shall be seated in that power you gape
 for : but as I have (I hope) very justly called *my Answer*
to you, Dolus an Virtus? so you will find, that you shall
 never have wit enough to catch us with Tricks, nor
 courage enough to convince us by the Sword, That your
 pragmatical Proposition is the *Interest of England.* FINIS.

(1)

VOTES, &c. of the Honourable House of Commons, Febr 25. &c. 1662. Upon Reading His Majesties Gracious DECLARATION and SPEECH, &c.

Die Mercurii 25. Feb. 15. Car. R.

Resolved, &c. *Nemine contradicente,*

That the humble thanks of this House be returned to His Majesty, for His Resolution to maintain the Act of Uniformity.

Resolved, &c.

That it be presented to the Kings Majesty as the humble Advice of this House, That no Indulgence be granted to the Dissenters from the Act of Uniformity.

Most Gracious Sovereign,

THe Knights, Citizens, and Burgeses of the Commons House of Parliament, did with great joy receive Your Majesties most gracious Speech, at the opening this Session of Parliament: And being thereby invited to consider of your Declaration of the Twenty sixth of December last; they have with all Sobriety, Duty, and Affection, examined the grounds thereof; and do by me present unto Your Majesty Their most hearty Thanks for the same, and humble Advice thereupon; both which, I do beseech Your Majesty, that you will vouchsafe me to deliver in their own words.

May it please Your most Excellent Majesty,

VVE Your Majesties most Dutiful and Loyal Subjects, the Knights, Citizens and Burgeses of the House of Commons in Parliament Assembled, having with

with all Fidelity and Obedience, considered of the several Matters comprised in Your Majesties late Gracious Declaration of the 26th of *December* last, and Your most Gracious Speech at the beginning of this present Session,

Do, in the first place for our selves, and in the names of all the Commons of *England*, render to Your Sacred Majesty, the Tribute of our most hearty Thanks, for that infinite Grace and Goodness wherewith Your Majesty hath been pleased to publish Your Royal Intentions of adhering to Your Act of Indemnity and Oblivion, by a Constant and Religious Observance of it. And our hearts are further enlarged in these returns of Thanksgivings, when we consider Your Majesties most Princely and Heroick Professions of relying upon the Affections of Your People, and abhorring all sort of Military and Arbitrary Rule. But above all, We can never enough remember, to the Honour of Your Majesties Piety, and our unspeakable Comfort, those solemn and most endearing Invitations of us Your Majesties Subjects, to prepare Laws to be presented to Your Majesty, against the growth and encrease of Popery ; and withall, to provide more Laws against Licentiousness and Impiety ; at the same time Declaring Your own Resolutions for maintaining the Act of Uniformity. And it becomes us alwayes to acknowledge and admire Your Majesties Wisdom in this Your Declaration, whereby Your Majesty is pleased to resolve, not only by Sumptuary Laws, but by Your own Royal Example of Frugality, to restrain that excess in mens Expences, which is grown so general and so exorbitant ; and to direct our Endeavours to find out fit and proper Laws for Advancement of Trade and Commerce.

After all this, we most humbly beseech Your Majesty to believe, That it is with extreme unwillingness and re-

luctancy of heart, that we are brought to differ from any thing which Your Majesty hath thought fit to propose; And though we do no way doubt, but that the unreasonable Distempers of mens Spirits, and the many Mutinies and Conspiracies which were carryed on, during the late Intervalls of Parliament, did reasonably incline Your Majesty to endeavour by Your Declaration to give some allay to those ill humours, till the Parliament Assembled; and the hopes of Indulgence, if the Parliament should consent to it, especially seeing the pretenders to this Indulgence, did seem to make some Titles to it, by virtue of Your Majesties Declaration from *Breda*. Nevertheless, we Your Majesties most Dutifull and Loyal Subjects, who are now returned to serve in Parliament, from those severall parts and places of Your Kingdom, for which we are chosen, Do humbly offer to Your Majesties great Wisdom, That it is in no sort advisable that there be any Indulgence to such persons who presume to dissent from the Act of Uniformity, and the Religion established.

For these Reasons,

VVE have considered the nature of Your Majesties Declaration from *Breda*, and are humbly of opinion, That Your Majesty ought not to be pressed with it any further,

Because it is not a Promise in it self, but only a Gracious Delaration of Your Majesties Intentions, to do what in You lay, and what a Parliament should advise Your Majesty to do; and no such Advice was ever given, or thought fit to be offered; nor could it be otherwise understood, because there were Laws of Uniformity then in being, which could not be dispensed with, but by Act of Parliament.

They

They who do pretend a right to that supposed promise, put the Right into the hands of their Representatives, whom they chose to serve for them in this Parliament, who have passed, and Your Majesty consented to the Act of Uniformity. If any shall presume to say, that a Right to the benefit of this Declaration doth still remain after this Act passed,

It tends to dissolve the very Bonds of Government, and to suppose a disability in Your Majesty and the Houses of Parliament, to make a Law contrary to any part of Your Majesties Declaration, though both Houses should advise Your Majesty to it.

We have also considered the nature of the Indulgence proposed, with reference to those Consequences, which must necessarily attend it.

It will establish Schism by a Law, and make the whole Government of the Church precarious, and the Censures of it of no Moment or Consideration at all.

It will no way become the Gravity or wisdom of a Parliament, to pass a Law at one Session for Uniformity, and at the next Session (the reasons of Uniformity continuing still the same) to pass another Law to frustrate or weaken the execution of it.

It will expose Your Majesty to the restless Importunity of every Sect or Opinion, and of every single person also, who shall presume to dissent from the Church of *England*.

It will be a cause of increasing Sects and Sectaries, whose numbers will weaken the true Protestant Profession so far, that it will at least be difficult for it, to defend it self against them : And, which is yet further considerable, those Numbers, which by being troublesome to the Government, find they can arrive to an Indulgence, well,

as their numbers increase, be yet more troublesome, that so at length they may arrive to a general Tolleration, which Your Majesty hath declared against; and in time, some prevalent Sect, will at last contend for an establishment; which, for ought can be foreseen, may end in Popery.

It is a thing altogether without President, and will take away all means of convicting Recusants, and be inconsistent with the method and proceedings of the Laws of England.

Lastly, It is humbly conceived, that the Indulgence proposed, will be so far from tending to the Peace of the Kingdom, that it is rather likely to occasion great disturbance. And on the contrary, That the asserting of the Laws, and the Religion establish'd, according to the Act of Uniformity, is the most probable means to produce a settled Peace and Obedience throughout Your Kingdom: Because the variety of Professions in Religion, when openly indulged, doth directly distinguish men into parties, and withall, gives them opportunity to count their numbers; which, considering the Animosities, that out of a Religious pride will be kept on foot by the several Factions, doth tend directly and inevitably to open disturbance. Nor can Your Majesty have any Security, that the Doctrine or Worship of the several Factions, which are all Governed by a several Rule, shall be consistent with the Peace of Your Kingdom.

And if any persons shall presume to disturb the Peace of the Kingdom, We do in all humility declare, That we will for ever, and in all Occasions, be ready with our utmost endeavour and assistance, to adhere to, and serve Your Majesty according to our bounden Duty and Allegiance.